



Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security News Release

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Statewide Disaster Declaration Issued for Flooding Conditions

(Boise) Due to flooding conditions and the potential for record runoff in many areas of the state, Governor Otter has declared a Statewide Declaration of Emergency. The declaration, approved today, brings the availability of state resources and rapid response to support impacted areas.

“As we continue to experience this growing threat of flooding it requires our proactive attention and continued vigilance,” said Governor Otter. “But I have the utmost faith and confidence in our emergency responders to assist our citizens should the situation worsen. Idahoans can be sure that we will ratchet up our response as needed.”

Currently Bingham and Jefferson counties are listed under the State Declaration. If conditions warrant additional counties may be added. The statewide declaration is a proactive step to reduce response times and to allow the state to support local jurisdictions in preparations that will help prevent damages from the expected record flows.

Flood prone conditions include heavy accumulations of snowpack and historically high snow water equivalent measurements. Early forecasts indicate that this will be one of the top five years on record. Snake River Basin water volumes are forecasted to be similar to 1997. Emergency managers are concerned that extreme runoff flows and subsequent rapid flooding could damage property and infrastructure. The declaration signed today enables the state to support implementation of local mitigation measures to prevent damage from the anticipated severe flooding.

The Bureau of Homeland Security has coordinated the distribution of sandbags and pumps throughout the state to help support local jurisdictions in their preparation efforts.

In addition BHS Area Field Officers are on the ground to coordinate preparation and response efforts. BHS has been working very closely with the Army Corps of Engineers who have teams in northern and eastern Idaho assisting with preparation efforts.

“BHS has been working closely with counties across the state in making prudent and proactive steps to be prepared for the floods,” said BHS Director Brigadier General Bill Shawver. “We plan for these events on a continual basis and we have been in constant coordination with local officials as this event has evolved. This declaration gives us the tools to respond as conditions dictate and to be able to react in real time.”

Note to reporters: The Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security is the State of Idaho's emergency management agency. Please note that Idaho BHS is an Idaho-specific agency, and it is not the same thing as the federal Department of Homeland Security. Within the State of Idaho organizational chart, Idaho BHS is aligned under the State of Idaho Military Division.

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